



**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION OF
PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT**



(FORMERLY ICEVI NEWSLINE)

October 2006

Message from the President

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Welcome to the first issue of ICEVI E-News of the 2006-2010 quadrennium. Those of you that have been reading this electronic newsletter regularly will note that we have made a name change. We have done so to avoid any possible confusion with "Newslite" the on-line newspaper access program of the National Federation of the Blind (USA).

So we are starting a new quadrennium with a new name for our newsletter and lots of new ideas on achieving our mission of assuring that all children with visual impairment have the access to education that is their basic human right.

I want to take a moment to thank many of you who wrote to us following the 12th World Conference to tell us how much you enjoyed that event. As you can imagine an event of that size took a lot of teamwork and I am extremely grateful to all of you who contributed to making the conference such a big success. Particular thanks to our wonderful Host Committee at the Malaysian Association for the Blind for the enormous effort they put into organizing the conference and to Heather Mason and her Program Committee for the high quality conference program. We are working to get the conference papers on the website and I hope that shortly after you receive this issue of E-News that those unable to be with us in Kuala Lumpur will be able to enjoy the papers presented at our 12th World Conference.

I am most grateful for the confidence the General Assembly placed in me by re-electing me to another term as your President. My work will be made easier by the team of fellow principal officers that were elected in Kuala Lumpur. I would like to share with you the portfolios that each of these individuals will carry during this quadrennium. Dr. Jill Keefe (Australia), 1st Vice President leads a team that is developing a strategic plan for ICEVI research activities that you will hear more about in the months ahead. Jill will also serve as our principal link with the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness and we will regularly turn to her for her globally recognized expertise in the area of low vision. I am very happy that Harry Svensson (Sweden) is again part of the principal officers group. Harry is already hard at work developing a strategic plan for the publications and communications portfolio he will handle. Harry will serve as the Editor of *The Educator*. Mrs. Nandini Rawal, as our new Treasurer, will keep her hands on the ICEVI "purse strings" and is working on a strategic plan related to the financial management issues of our organization. Of course, she will continue to serve as "ICEVI Poet Laureate".

All of us in the principal officers group are delighted, as I am sure you are, that we will continue to have access to the vision, energy and enthusiasm of our beloved Secretary General, Dr. M.N.G. Mani who will also serve as the Executive Director of the "Global Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment" which has been launched with our partner The World Blind Union.

I believe the quadrennium ahead will be both active and productive and I hope each of you will make a commitment to work within your region to help us achieve our dream of the day when every child with a visual impairment will have access to the education which is his/her basic human right.

Sincerely,



Larry Campbell
President

ICEVI REGIONAL CHAIRS FOR 2006-2010

ICEVI functions through seven regions, each headed by a Regional Chairperson, Deputy Regional Chairperson(s) and a regional committee. For the quadrennium 2006-2010 ICEVI's Regional Chairpersons are Mr. Wilfred Maina, Africa; Prof. Dr. Ismail Salleh, East Asia; Mr. Hans Welling, Europe; Mrs. Lucia Piccione, Latin America, Dr. Kathy Huebner, North America/Caribbean; Mrs. Frances Gentle, Pacific and Dr. Bhushan Punani, West Asia. Please join us in wishing these individuals and their committees much success during this quadrennium.

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

Education For All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) is a global campaign and program of the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) acting in partnership with the World Blind Union (WBU) to ensure that girls and boys with blindness and low vision, including children who are deafblind; and multiply disabled visually impaired children enjoy the right to education. The campaign was formally launched by Y.B. Dato' Sri Hishammuddin Bin Tun Hussein, the Hon. Minister of Education, Government of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, on July 16, 2006. The Honorable Minister was assisted by three visually impaired children and the Presidents of ICEVI and The World Blind Union. The global campaign and program primarily focus on children in the developing world and address the key Millennium Development Goals -achieving universal primary education, -promoting gender equality and -developing global partnerships.

The campaign is being implemented at two levels. A Global Task Force (GTF), chaired by the President of ICEVI has developed the overall framework for the campaign including its guiding principles and a business plan. Currently the following organizations are members of the Global Task Force:

- Christoffel Blindenmission
- Deafblind International
- Hilton-Perkins International Program
- International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
- International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment
- Light for the World
- Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted
- Royal Visio International
- The National Organization of the Spanish Blind (ONCE)
- Sightsavers International
- World Blind Union

The day-to-day implementation of the campaign will be the responsibility of National Task Forces (NTF) who will work in close collaboration with the regional infrastructures of ICEVI, WBU and a wide range of international and intergovernmental organizations active in the country.

The campaign will work within the framework of the general and special education systems of countries and will create a demand for education of children with visual impairment. Provision of appropriate support in educational settings and creation of alternative settings to reach out to the un-reached are also key aspects of the campaign.

COUNTRY SELECTION: 1ST PHASE OF THE EFA-VI CAMPAIGN

The Global Task Force of the EFA-VI campaign at a recent meeting in Kuala Lumpur developed the following nine criteria as the most important to be considered in the selection of countries where the campaign will be initially implemented.

- *Presence of a functioning organisation(s) of the blind*
- *Programs for EFA already in place*
- *Availability of facilities for human resource development (such as teacher training)*
- *Evidence of Government's commitment to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals*
- *NGDOs actively working in the country in the area of education (local and International NGOs)*
- *Existing capacity to support the education of children with visual impairment (such as braille production centres)*
- *Focus on inclusive education in respect to Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*
- *Implementing Blindness Prevention Programs (such as the Vision 2020 program)*
- *Potential to make impact on other countries within the region*

The regional chairs have shared this information with the country representatives of ICEVI and it is also posted on the ICEVI website. The Global Task Force in consultation with regional leaders will select countries based on the data gathered from the countries and on the basis of available resources to implement the campaign. Look for more information on the campaign and country selection posted on ICEVI's website www.icevi.org in November / December 2006.

ICEVI-NIPPON HIGHER EDUCATION PROJECT LAUNCHED

ICEVI and The Nippon Foundation, in collaboration with PERTUNI (Indonesian Blind Union), launched a pilot project on support services for students with visual

impairment in higher education at a ceremony on September 14th at the Indonesian University of Education in Bandung, West Java. Over the current academic year this pilot project will explore two different approaches for providing necessary support services to approximately 75 blind and low vision students enrolled in some 16 higher education facilities in Bandung and Jakarta. The program was launched in a special ceremony presided over by Prof. Dr. Chaedar Aslwasilah Vice-Rector for Research and Cooperation of UPI and included Mr. Didi Tarsidi, President, Indonesian Blind Union, Mr. Larry Campbell, President, ICEVI and Mr. Bambang Basuki, Executive Director of Mitra Netra. The objectives of the program are as follows:

- *To make access to higher education a less formidable experience for blind students thus encouraging more students to enroll and bringing back into higher education some students who have dropped out because of the pressures associated with having no access to support services,*
- *To reduce stress and improve satisfaction and performance of blind students in higher education,*
- *To provide valuable data on two different approaches as it relates to such factors- flexibility, accessibility, student satisfaction levels,*
- *To create greater awareness on the part of government officials responsible for institutions of higher education for policies and services that make institutions of higher education more accessible to blind and other disabled students and*
- *To create greater awareness on the part of the general public in the target areas served by the pilot project through the development of public education materials and media coverage of this ICEVI-Nippon Foundation initiative.*

ICEVI and the Nippon Foundation will be conducting mid-term review during the first week of February 2007.

NABPS BECOMES AN INTERNATIONAL PARTNER MEMBER OF ICEVI

The Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted (NABPS) has recently become the fifth International Partner member of the ICEVI and a member of the ICEVI Executive Committee. The active involvement of NABPS on the ICEVI Executive Committee and on the Global Task Force augurs especially well as ICEVI acting in partnership with the WBU undertakes the global campaign on education for all children with visual impairment. NABPS's International Department has a long and distinguished record and much solid experience in implementing programs that support the empowerment of blind persons in many countries throughout the world; experience that will be most welcome by the ICEVI Executive Committee. NABPS will be represented on the Executive Committee by Mr. Arnt Holte.

The other four International Partner members of ICEVI, each of whom commit to at least \$20,000 in annual support to the work of ICEVI are the Asian Foundation for the Prevention of Blindness, Christoffel Blindenmission, The National Organization of the Spanish Blind (ONCE), and Sightsavers International. The technical and financial support of these International Partners provide ICEVI has been critical to our recent growth and development and we hope in the years ahead that other organization with an interest in international efforts to improve access to education for children and youth with visual impairment will join us. Welcome NABPS!!

DR. PENNY HARTIN, THE NEW CEO OF THE WORLD BLIND UNION

Dr. Penny Hartin of Canada has been appointed the new Chief Executive Officer of the World Blind Union. Dr. Hartin has rich administrative and academic experience in the services for persons with visual impairment. ICEVI looks forward to close collaboration with her in the implementation of the global campaign on education for all children with visual impairment. Best wishes in your new position, Penny!

ICEVI CONGRATULATES LORD LOW OF DALSTON

Colin Low, the chairman of the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) and the President of the European Blind Union (EBU), has been made a life peer by the Queen. As a peer he is a member of and sits in the House of Lords, the upper chamber of the UK parliament. Besides representing RNIB in the Executive Committee of ICEVI Lord Low of Dalston has been ICEVI's legal expert for many years.

ICEVI HONORS

The following individuals and organisations were honored at the 12th World Conference with the ICEVI International Leadership Award for outstanding contributions to education of children with visual impairment and to ICEVI.

Individual Awards:

Larry Campbell	..	North America and Caribbean Region
Heather Mason	..	Europe Region
Lucia Piccione	..	Latin America Region
K. Piyasena	..	West Asia Region

Organisation Awards:

Christoffel Blindenmission
Sight Savers International

ICEVI also recognised Bill Brohier, the Immediate Past-President, Steve McCall, Vice-President, and Grace Chan, J. P., Treasurer of ICEVI for their dedicated services to ICEVI.

MEETING OF THE GLOBAL TASK FORCE ON EFAVI CAMPAIGN

The Global Task Force on “education for all children with visual impairment” will meet in Madrid on 23-24 October 2006. The Task Force will have a very busy agenda that includes developing a “short-list” of countries that will be considered for inclusion in phase 1 of the campaign. Task Force members will also work in small groups to tackle a number of important issues such as: - further defining roles and responsibilities of organizations involved at all levels of the campaign, -strategies for national level activities, -demand creation and resource mobilisation to support campaign activities. ICEVI and WBU are pleased with the increased interest that is being shown by a growing number of international and intergovernmental organizations that wish to be part of this global effort to ensure educational access to the millions of children with visual impairment in developing countries who currently do not enjoy this basic human right.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

On August 25, after five years of negotiations, a United Nations ad-hoc committee finally agreed on a document that will lay the foundation for a Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The convention specifically prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in all areas of life, including the right to education. The responsibility for providing education is now firmly put on the State Parties. It is clearly stated that education of persons with disabilities should sort under the Ministry of Education. The convention also underlines that all forms of education must be covered by the general curriculum of the country to ensure high quality of education for all children, including comparable literacy and other skills.

Paragraph 3 of Article 24 on Education is the result of the strong advocacy by the World Blind Union (WBU) and includes the right to Braille. This is the first time that Braille is recognised as the script for blind, deafblind or visually impaired persons.

This will put demands on governments to employ teachers qualified in Braille and other alternative modes of script or communication as well as on the individual teacher. The convention also proposes that skilled teachers with disabilities themselves are employed.

The convention has been sent to the General Assembly for a formal adaptation later on this year. Once this is done it will be open for signing and ratification by all UN member countries. This is a commitment which will affect approximately 650 million people around the world as it is estimated that 10 per cent of the world's population have a disability.

In the next issue of *The Educator* you will find more information about the convention and its implications for the field of education of persons with visual impairment.

FORTHCOMING MEETING IN UNESCO

The President and the Secretary General of ICEVI will meet Dr. Kenneth Eklindh at the Special Education Division, UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 20 October to discuss UNESCO support for the global campaign. The regional chairs have already been requested to contact national and regional bodies of UNESCO and UNICEF to promote this campaign.

EAST ASIA MEETINGS

The Secretary General met with Prof. Dr. Ismail Salleh, Regional Chairperson of the East Asia region and worked out a general plan of action for the region. The East Asia regional committee will meet on 14-15 December 2006 in Kuala Lumpur, where strategies for implementing the global campaign will be developed. The regional committee will also prepare a plan of action for other capacity building activities during that meeting. The Regional Chairperson is proposing to visit the member countries in the region in the near future to strengthen country level ICEVI networks.

EUROPEAN COMMITTEE MEETING

The regional committee of the European region will meet in Athens, Greece on 17-18 November 2006.

MEETINGS WITH ORGANISATIONS IN NEPAL

The Secretary General visited organisations serving persons with visual impairment in Nepal on 6-8 September and discussed the global campaign. He also met with the officials of the Ministry of Education and shared information about the EFA-VI campaign. ICEVI has been asked to become a part of the "Welcome Campaign" which will be organised by the Government of Nepal in April 2007 to advocate for education for all children with visual impairment.

ICEVI/SPEVI FORUM

Under the leadership of Frances Gentle and her very active regional committee ICEVI and SPEVI (South Pacific Educators of the Visually Impaired) will hold a regional planning meeting immediately prior to the SPEVI biennial conference in Fremantle, Australia. ICEVI is using this opportunity to bring together 10-15 key decision makers from throughout the Pacific Region to develop appropriate strategies for the implementation of the EFA-VI campaign in the Pacific Region. The pre-conference workshop will take place on 5-6 January 2007. Larry Campbell, President, Jill Keeffe, First Vice-President, Frances Gentle, Regional Chair and Mani, Secretary General will make presentations at this workshop.

4TH AFRICA FORUM

The 4th Africa Forum will be held in Nairobi, Kenya on 6-12 May, 2007. Papers covering the following themes namely, *Blindness and social exclusion, Opportunities and/or challenges towards inclusive education, Blindness is no barrier to employability, and Leisure & sport are invited.*

Abstracts for this important conference, should not exceed one hundred and fifty (150) words, and should be submitted no later than December 15, 2006 via email to aubrey.webson@perkins.org or via fax to +617-923-8076 (U.S.). Authors who are selected for paper presentations will be advised and given a deadline with specific details for full paper submissions. Accepted papers must be completed and received by the program committee by March 31, 2007.

Presenters will work in panels of 3-4 based on the subject of their submissions. The organisers are seeking papers built on practical life experience, academic research, and/or the development of knowledge from program implementation.

ICEVI will be actively involved in the Africa Forum and will use the Forum as a vehicle for launching the EFA-VI campaign in the region.

14TH DEAFBLIND INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONFERENCE

The 14th Deafblind International World Conference will be held in Perth, the capital of Western Australia in September 2007. The call for papers for this conference closes on 30 November 2006. Please log onto www.dbiconference2007.asn.au for more information and registration details.

8TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF IAPB

The 8th General Assembly of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness will be held from 28 July to 2 August 2008 at Centro de Convenções Rebouças, São Paulo, Brazil. The theme of the general assembly is “Excellence and Equity in Eye Care” and more details will be sent in due course. For further information contact: Louis Pizzarello, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary General, International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness or IAPB Central Office, L.V. Prasad Eye Institute, L.V. Prasad Marg, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad 500 034, INDIA.

SCHULZE INTENSIVE TRAINING COURSE FOR VISUALLY CHALLENGED WOMEN

The first Marga-Schulze Award for the promotion of higher education among blind girls was presented to Mr. J.L. Kaul, General Secretary, All India Confederation of the Blind (AICB), New Delhi, India during the world conference of ICEVI held in Kuala Lumpur in July 2006. The Marga-Schulze Foundation is also encouraging organisations to fund intensive training programs to develop skills of blind girls. One such program was conducted by the AICB in New Delhi from 16 May to 30 June 2006. Twenty-seven (27) participants from India and Pakistan took part in the program and training was given in Computer Applications, Orientation and Mobility, Home Management, Personal Management, Language improvement Skills, Self-Defence Skills. The participants found the course very useful. ICEVI thanks the Marga-Schulze Foundation for promoting higher education of blind girls and hopes the Foundation will play an important role in the EFA-VI campaign.

TACTILE BOOKS, FUN AND INTEGRATION

Royal Visio is the Dutch contact for Typhlo & Tactus, the only European competition promoting the design and production of tactile illustrated books for visually impaired children. Every year, prizes are awarded in two categories: fantasy and fiction based on a story from each country's cultural heritage for readers aged 3 to 12. Tactus was launched by Les Doigts Qui Rêvent, an organisation which produces tactile books. Funding from the European Union and the participating countries enables the books to be produced fairly cheaply. Visually impaired children and their families, and blind family members of sighted children are the beneficiaries of this program. Printed in ink as well as Braille, the books look and feel attractive and, help to integrate visually impaired and sighted children. In April 2006 Visio jointly organised an international tactile book exhibition enjoyed by blind and sighted visitors. Contact Visio www.visio.org for more information about this program.

**EDUCATION FOR ALL – THEME OF THE NEXT ISSUE
OF THE EDUCATOR**

The theme of the next issue of The Educator will be “Education For All”. This issue will be released during January 2007. Those who want to make professional contribution to this issue may contact the Editor, Harry Svensson (harry.svensson@sit.se) or Mani, M.N.G., Secretary General (sgicevi@vsnl.net) and the completed articles should reach the ICEVI Secretariat before November 15, 2006.

ICEVI E-News comes to your mailbox in April and October every year. Please provide us the e-mail addresses of individuals and organizations that may be interested in receiving the ICEVI E-News and The Educator.

For further details, contact:



ICEVI Secretariat

**International Council for Education of
People with Visual Impairment**

3, Professors' Colony, Palamalai Road, Jothipuram Post
Coimbatore – 641 047, INDIA

Phone: 91-422-2469104, Fax: 91-422-2693414

e-mail: sgicevi@vsnl.net, Visit us at www.icevi.org